

Initial Draft Scope of Work

Develop floodplain property acquisition criteria within the San Joaquin Basin.

Scope of the Project

The San Joaquin River Acquisition Criteria project will develop a set of for development of floodplain acquisition criteria specific to riparian, floodplain, and channel restoration needs, with an emphasis on anadromous fish needs for the San Joaquin and the Tuolumne, Stanislaus, and Merced rivers. This project will be contracted through a university to 1) research existing conservation acquisition plans to identify applicable features to the specific needs of the San Joaquin System, 2) develop a proposed set of ranking criteria, 3) quantify, where possible, the expected benefits to anadromous fish species, 4) evaluate the utility of the criteria by ranking recent acquisitions, and 5) identify additional information, if needed, to substantially improve the screening criteria.

Cooperators include the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Modesto, The Nature Conservancy, and the Friends of the Tuolumne.

Justification for the Project

Unlike the Sacramento and American rivers, the San Joaquin River and tributaries below the Merced River lack comprehensive or consistent guidelines for conservation acquisitions nor anadromous fish habitat acquisition. Some tributary specific planning is occurring on the lower Tuolumne River and is beginning on the lower Merced River. In the meantime acquisitions are being pursued and funded by a variety of agencies in the name of riparian and anadromous habitat conservation. While these projects are clearly justifiable on an individual basis, they are not being judged by a consistent set of criteria applicable to the system as a unit. In order to implement acquisition projects which provide consistent benefit to anadromous fishes a consistent set of screening criteria are needed for the lower San Joaquin River and its tributaries.

This project will benefit all anadromous species which use the San Joaquin River and tributaries, as habitat needs for each of these species will be considered in development of the criteria. A comprehensive set of criteria will also create better linkages among properties throughout the system, both physically and from an ecosystem perspective.

Supports multiple actions throughout the Restoration Plan focused on restoration of natural channel and riparian habitat values.

Budget:

\$100,000 (with \$20,000 committed but not utilized by the AFRP in FY99)